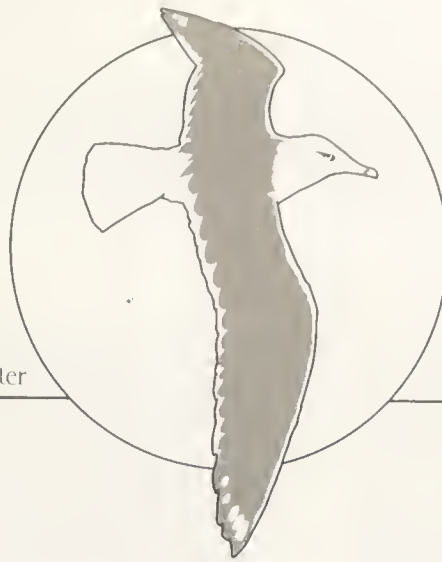


# The Gull



Golden Gate Audubon Society Newsletter

Volume 85 No. 10 November 2001

## Two Ways to Help GGAS In Our Efforts to Preserve and Enjoy Our Natural World

**Y**our Golden Gate Audubon Society has been successful in saving wetlands and other habitats, in bringing environmental education programs and an appreciation of nature to the children of underserved communities, and in providing you, our members, with one of the best birding field trip programs in the United States, in large part because we have such a wonderfully large and supportive membership.

As the threats to our natural world increase and as our need to provide educational and birding programs increases so does our need to increase our membership base. And you can help us do it and even get something for your efforts.

One of our wonderful members has offered us a grant that allows us to offer you an incentive to help us get new members. Here's how it works.

If you send us the names of five of your friends who are not presently Audubon members but who you think might like to join Audubon, we will give you a \$5 gift certificate to our GGAS

nature store (we sell bird seed and feeders and bird field guides and local where-to-bird books). We will send to those five folk our membership brochure and an invitation to join. They may not join, but you'll still get your gift and we're sure some of the folk we reach out to will join us and help us move our programs forward.

There's another way that you can help us. The National Audubon Society is offering its chapters a membership recruitment incentive. From now through the end of December 2001, if you use the accompanying form to give a friend or relative a gift subscription to National Audubon for only \$15, your local chapter, Golden Gate Audubon, will get that \$15 to help our programs. Do think of giving a gift subscription to Audubon as a Christmas or Hanukah present this year.

Your participation in either or both of these programs will help make Golden Gate Audubon more effective in our efforts to advocate, educate and recreate for nature. Thanks.

## Notice

There will be no GGAS meetings in December. However, we encourage you to attend and participate in either one or both of our Christmas Bird Counts which will be held on December 16 (Oakland) and December 27 (San Francisco). See page 6 for details.

Our regular monthly meetings will resume in January on Thursday, January 10 at the Randall Museum in San Francisco and Thursday, January 17 at the Northbrae Community Church in Berkeley.

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## Field Trips Calendar

### **Saturday, November 3, MUDDY HOLLOW, THREE WAYS, Point Reyes National Seashore.**

Meet at 9:15 am in the Muddy Hollow Trail parking lot off of Limantour Road. For carpooling, meet at the North Berkeley BART lot by 8:00 a.m. Trip ends at 1:00 p.m. Leader: Jeffrey Black, 510-526-7068. \*

### **Sunday, November 4, STRYBING ARBORETUM.**

Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the front gate of the Arboretum (9th Ave. and Lincoln Way). See December trip for details. Leaders: Allan Ridley and Helen McKenna (415) 566-3241.

### **Sunday, November 11, COYOTE HILLS REGIONAL PARK.**

Meet at 9:00 a.m. in the first parking lot on the left (beyond the fee booth). From the East Bay take I-880 south to Rt. 84/Dumbarton Bridge exit. Turn right and continue west. Exit on Paseo Padre Pkwy. Turn right and continue north one mile, left on Patterson Ranch Road to Coyote Hills. Bring lunch and liquids. This is a unique park with fresh water and salt pond habitat. We should see ducks, waders and much more. Beginners welcome. Heavy rain cancels. Leader: Peter Allen (415) 892-8063. \$

### **Wednesday, November 14, BERKELEY AQUATIC PARK, and other nearby areas.**

Meet at 9:30 a.m. in the northwest corner of parking lot of the former Spenger's Restaurant (4th and Hearst St.) to carpool. We should see returning shorebirds and migratory ducks. Lunch optional. Rain cancels trip.

Beginners welcome. Leaders: Anna Wilcox (510) 351-9301 and Jean-Marie Spoelman.

### **Sunday, November 25, ARROWHEAD MARSH, Martin Luther King Regional Shoreline.**

Meet at 9:30 a.m. Take Hwy 880 to Hegenberger Rd. exit. Drive west to Doolittle and turn right. Turn right on Swan Way. Turn left after a block and take the dirt road to the last parking lot. Many migrant shorebirds; Clapper Rail and Burrowing Owl possible. Leaders: Lillian Fujii and Steve Hayashi (510) 236-4167, steveandlil@worldnet.att.net.

### **Saturday and Sunday, December 1 and 2, GRAY LODGE AND SACRAMENTO WILDLIFE REFUGES.**

For this two-day trip, meet on Saturday at 9:00 a.m. in lot # 14 at Gray Lodge. Drive east on I-80 15 miles beyond Davis to route 99 exit. Go north 52 miles on Route 99 to the town of Gridley, turn left (west) on Colusa Hwy and continue five miles to Pennington Road. Turn left and follow signs to Gray Lodge Wildlife Refuge. Proceed through the checking station (entrance fee) and continue to parking lot # 14. We will caravan through Gray Lodge Wildlife Refuge on Saturday, and then visit some other sites in Sutter County and Butte County, depending on where the birds are (so make sure you have plenty of gasoline before arriving at Gray Lodge.) On Sunday, we will meet at 9:00 a.m. in the visitors' parking lot at the Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge (entrance fee). To get there from I-5, take the Princeton

exit (the sign used to say "Norman Road," but now says something like "Road 68") just north of the Glenn Co. line, and follow signs to the Refuge. We will be looking for wintering geese (four species), Tundra Swans, a variety of ducks, raptors and Sandhill Cranes. Allow two and one-half hours driving time from the Bay Area. (AAA map of Sacramento Valley Region is helpful.) For accommodations, you might try the Blue Gum Willows Motel off I-5 at Willows (530) 934-5401 or other hotels (including a Best Western) in Willows. There is no lodge at Gray Lodge. Camping might be possible at the State Park in Colusa. Bring lunch (we probably will not be near any stores or restaurants), snacks, liquids, scopes, and clothes appropriate for the Sacramento Valley in December (cold, with wind and rain always possible). Heavy rain cancels trip. You may join us for both days or just one day. Leaders: Steve and Renee Margolin. (530) 342-6476.

### **Saturday, December 1, REDWOOD REGIONAL PARK, Oakland.**

Meet at 8 a.m. in the last parking lot. Take Hwy 13 to Redwood Road exit, go east (towards the hills) on Redwood Rd. 3 miles to park entrance on left. We will be seeking resident and wintering landbirds in riparian, redwood and coastal scrub habitats. Leader: Rusty Scalf (510) 666-9936, rscalf@jps.net.

### **Sunday, December 2, STRYBING ARBORETUM.**

Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the front gate of the Arboretum (9th Ave. and Lincoln Way) for this regular first Sunday of



## November Meetings

the month half-day trip. The Strybing Arboretum is a delightful section of Golden Gate Park, with several "micro-habitats" attracting a varied array of resident, migrant and vagrant birds. Beginners and all others welcome. Leaders: Allan Ridley and Helen McKenna (415) 566-3241

### **Sunday, December 2, ARROWHEAD MARSH, Martin Luther King Regional Shoreline.**

Meet at 9:30 am for this 3 hour trip. Take Hwy 880 to Hegenberger Rd. exit. Drive west about a half mile, just past Leet Drive, turn right into small parking lot. Many migrant shorebirds; Clapper Rail and Burrowing Owl possible. Rain cancels. Beginners encouraged. Leader: Jeffrey Black, 510-526-7068. \*

### **Wednesday, December 12, LAKE MERRIT, Oakland.**

Meet at the Rotary Science Center at 9:30 a.m. Go east on Grand Ave. to Lake Merritt. Continue to the Rotary Science Center (on the right just beyond the duck pond). This is a good opportunity to review waterfowl. Beginners welcome. Lunch optional. Rain cancels trip. Leaders: Anna Wilcox (510) 351-9301 and Jean-Marie Spoelman.

Trips marked with a (\$) go to parks or other sites which require an entrance fee. Carpooling arrangements will be attempted by leader for trips marked with a (\*).

**Problems, etc.:** If you need information and have difficulty reaching a field trip leader, or **IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO LEAD A TRIP**, call Anthony Fisher, Field Trips Committee Chair, (510) 658-8769. Loveisant@aol.com.

### **East Bay**

#### ***A Slide Show with Eleanor Briccetti***

Eleanor Briccetti's passion for nature photography stems from her love of wildlife, the outdoors, and birdwatching. Her favorite haunts include the Richmond shoreline, Palo Alto Baylands, Sacramento and Klamath National Wildlife Refuges, The Grand Tetons, and Yellowstone National Park.

Eleanor's works have been displayed at the University of Indianapolis, Portland State University, and several Bay Area locations, such as Albany Arts Gallery, Berkeley Store Gallery, and Los Medanos College. She is a member of Bay Area Bird Photographers, and Image Circle Photographers. Publications include Birder's World, Outdoor California Magazine, Sierra Club Yodeler Magazine, Family News, Children's Community Center 1999 and 2000 Yearbooks, and the University of Indianapolis Alumni Magazine. In 1998 and 2001 she received a first prize and honorable mention in the color print division of the El Cerrito Art Association competition. Some of her images can be seen at her website

<http://www.briccettiphoto.com>

Please join us at the Northbrea Community Church on Thursday, November 15, from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. for an evening with Eleanor as she

shows slides from her visits to Churchill, Manitoba and the Pribilof Islands of Alaska.

### **San Francisco**

#### ***Digiscoping! Taking Digital Pictures through a Spotting Scope***

Would you like to photograph the birds you see through your spotting scope? Do you have (or plan to get) a digital camera and computer? By combining a spotting scope with the instant feedback of a digital camera, you can capture and save views of birds directly to your home computer. Optically, the scope can magnify the focal length of the camera lens to yield the 35 mm equivalent of a 6000+ mm telephoto! And, using common software, you can adjust your photos for archiving, electronic publishing, or photo-quality printing.

Join amateur birder and photographer George Raiche at the Randall Museum on Thursday, November 8, from 7 to 9 p.m., to learn more about equipment and techniques for digiscoping. George has a web page that offers a very good primer to get you started or take you further. <http://www.digibird.com/>

The Randall Museum is located at 199 Museum Way, above the Castro, off Roosevelt Way, which is accessible from either 14<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup> Streets, in San Francisco.

Wishing You a  
Happy Turkey  
Day



# Job Announcement: Community Coordinator for the Golden Gate Audubon Society

## **Responsibilities:**

- Coordinate environmental education programming on Saturdays
- Train volunteers, and interns
- Teach environmental education programs in the schools and parks during week-days
- Conduct Research and develop curriculum materials
- Translate curriculum materials and outreach materials
- Outreach to local East Oakland communities
- Help organize logistics for teacher trainings, meetings, and other events
- Schedule environmental education programming with teachers, high school and adult docent volunteers
- Help update and produce curriculum manuals
- Recruit new docent volunteers (setting up tables at fairs, advertising etc...)
- Assist in developing community advisory board

## **Required qualifications:**

- Self-starter with the ability to work both independently and as part of a team
- A Bachelor's degree (life science, environmental science or related field)
- Bi-lingual Spanish/English
- Experience working in racially diverse underserved communities
- Valid California driver's license and access to an insured automobile
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills
- Computer literacy (Microsoft Office, internet research skills)

## **Desired qualifications:**

- Bi-cultural
- Experience recruiting and supervising volunteers
- Experience working with spread sheets (such as Excel and Access)
- Project management experience
- Teaching experience
- Community outreach and or organizing experience
- Experience working for public service

This position reports to the Education Director.

Salary: \$34,000-36,000. Depending on Experience. Benefits included.

Deadline to Apply: Wednesday, September 26, 2001

Audubon is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Women and people of color are encouraged to apply.

Please submit a cover letter and resume to:

Amiko Mayeno  
Audubon Society  
2236 Mariner Square Drive, Suite 201  
Alameda, CA 94501

Fax: (510) 769-2083  
e-mail [amayeno@audubon.org](mailto:amayeno@audubon.org)  
NO PHONE CALLS PLEASE

## Two Key GGAS Volunteer Positions Are Open

### **Field Trip Coordinator**

Anthony Fisher, our current Field Trip Coordinator, announced in October that he will not be able to continue his duties driving the highly successful GGAS field trip program.

If you are energetic and dedicated and are interested in this important GGAS position, please contact the GGAS office for more information.

This vital position is tremendously rewarding and will put you in contact with all the great birders we have in our chapter.

### **Observations Editor**

We also sadly learned in October that Colin Murphy, our Observations Editor for the past four years, would like to step down.

So here is another excellent volunteer opportunity for the right person. Murphy says she is "more than willing to spend time training a new person...I have learned a great deal over the years regarding how to simplify this most interesting job and would be happy to share the information with my successor."

Again please contact the GGAS office for more information and complete details on this key GGAS volunteer position.





## Juveniles

**T**his summer I had fun watching the antics of the immature birds called juveniles. They fought among themselves like any ordinary human siblings would do, mostly for food. They were nearly as exuberant as teenagers at a mall, jabbering loudly as they jostled for a front line place at the feeders.

The ash-throated flycatcher mob of four had punk top notches and voices which were changing much as a teen's might do. The oak titmice were smaller versions of that punk look. All the youngsters had a fuzzy, rumped look about them.

There seemed to be a wide range of plumages amongst these juveniles. Some were obviously chips off the old blocks. You could identify the spotted towhee kids who looked like their parents but were duller with blurred markings. Ditto the jays, chickadees, titmice, goldfinches and mourning doves. The dark-eyed juncos could be identified as sparrow types but are plain old brown on the backs with streaky light breasts. Their white outer tail feathers gave them away.

In bird books you might see two spellings: juvenal and juvenile. They have evolved into two distinct terms. The former refers to the first coat of feathers acquired by a young bird

after its natal down. This plumage will be replaced by the first winter plumage when the bird molts for the first time. A "juvenile" bird is one that is older than a nestling or chick but has not yet reached sexual maturity or its first basic (winter) plumage. So, a "juvenile" bird wears "juvenal" plumage. Confused? I hope not!

Plumage characteristics vary tremendously among the various species. The rule is that there are no fixed rules. In fact, beginning birders get so hung up on markings and color that they (I include myself here) are sure an individual bird must be a rare bird because it is different from the picture in the field guide. A big thrill for me was becoming experienced enough to identify a juvenile varied thrush wearing juvenal plumage! All sorts of differences show up because of a bird's age, sex, season (are feathers worn or new?) and feeding habits. Try to be open-minded. There is also a wide range of abnormalities including albinism.

Albinism means an abnormal lack of pigment resulting in white or whitish external features. This is usually due to a recessive gene which is passed along or it can be because of dietary deficiencies or physical trauma. Partial albinism is more common than total albinism. We once had a

partially albino California thrasher. Because they are so easily seen and are different from their own kind, they usually don't live as long as normal birds.

For some reason, albinism is recorded among certain bird species more often than others. In North America it is recorded in 304 bird species. Most common among all wild birds were American robins. More than 8%, or one robin in 30,000, is albino or partially albino. It is unrecorded among many families.

I assume that juvenal plumage is usually somewhat drab to protect the young bird while it learns the hardships of adulthood. The same assumption holds true in bird species in which the female is the drab adult because she needs to be inconspicuous while sitting on her nest. Males of these types of birds need to be showy in order to attract a mate. Competition in the whirl of the courting world is fierce and the one who is noticed gets the best female. Presumably he is the best and the brightest so he gets to pass along all those good genes.

I look forward to seeing our fall flocks returning. Perhaps some of them will still have some of that beautiful courtship plumage.

## Get the GULL online

You can generally get the latest issue of the GULL online before receiving it in the mail. Just go to our Web site anytime before the first of the month and it is generally there where you can read it and if you wish download it and print it. Our Web site address is [www.goldengateaudubon.org](http://www.goldengateaudubon.org); make sure you bookmark this site for easy access.

# Field Trip Reports

## November 2001

### **Snag Lake, Lassen Volcanic National Forest, 8/24-8/27,**

David Rice and Robin Pulich: 12 participants, 85 species. This yearly backpack trip offers a chance to immerse yourself in an excellent mountain birding experience. Bald Eagle, Northern Goshawk, Blue Grouse, Williamson's Sapsucker, Gray Jay, Townsend's Solitaire and Nashville, Hermit and MacGillivray's Warblers were some of the beautiful

birds enjoyed. Weasels in the forest and a Coyote serenade made for a well-rounded weekend. **South Shore, Alameda, 9/12,** Anna Wilcox and Jean-Marie Spoelman: 15 participants, 37 species. Migrant waders including a single Snowy Plover and Red Knot were enjoyed. Three Common Terns among the many Forster's were also seen. Common Terns are dependable at Elsie Romer Sanctuary in September. **Las Gallinas Sewage Ponds,**

**Marin County, 9/15,** Bob Lewis: 21 participants, 59 species. A Northern Harrier harried a Red-shouldered Hawk while an American Kestrel harassed a Red-tailed Hawk. The harrying harrier turned her attention to a White-tailed Kite and an immature Golden Eagle drifted over the ponds. A Pectoral Sandpiper, five Vaux's Swifts and a Willow Flycatcher were doing the migrant thing. A rewarding morning indeed!

## Christmas Bird Counts

**Oakland: Sunday, December 16 – San Francisco: Thursday, December 27**

### **Sign Up For Our Christmas Bird Counts**

**A**s we have since the 1930s, Golden Gate Audubon Society will hold two Christmas Bird Counts (CBC) this year, one each in San Francisco and Oakland. Please join us this year for one or both counts! Anyone can participate regardless of birding skills. Notices, with sign-up details, will be mailed in early November to all who have participated in the past five years. Anyone else wanting to participate should telephone the GGAS office (510-843-2222) to be put on the mailing list.

On a CBC, birders record as many species and individuals as possible in

one day in a circle that covers a 15-mile diameter. We break into teams led by local experts to search fields, shorelines, suburbs and mountain trails for wintering birds. Others stay at home and count the birds coming to their bird feeders. After a day of birding, everyone gets together at the informal count dinner (good, wholesome and reasonably priced!). At the dinner, we tally the total species seen and each group shares stories of their bird sightings and adventures. Some groups of participants have been covering the same area for so many years it is as much a social event as a bird count. New participants enjoy

meeting other birders and learning good locations to bird. In addition to all the fun we have, on the serious side, all the information we collect is submitted to the National Audubon Society, and made available to researchers studying bird distribution and population trends. Some information is used by land managers and environmental activist to protect our local wildlife. We look forward to you joining our Christmas Bird Counts.

Alan Hopkins, Compiler for the San Francisco CBC &

Joelle Buffa and Clyde Morris, Co-Compilers for the Oakland CBC.





## Birds of North America: Western Region Smithsonian Handbooks

By Fred J. Alsop III. DK Publishing. New York. 2001. \$24.95

**T**his newly published flexible-covered book is moving into a very crowded market. Recent years have brought field guides from Donald and Lillian Stokes, American Bird Conservancy (ABC), Kenn Kaufman plus updated guides from Peterson and National Geographic. Most birders now recognize that the Sibley Guide has raised comparison and field identification into a realm of greater sophistication and detail. So amidst this plenty, what does the Alsop book offer?

First, it must be noted that DK Publishing is a long-successful publisher of heavily illustrated books on many subjects. Their publications are quite successful in England. They bring to this book their expected graphic expertise, quality reproduction of pictures plus a clear and predictable lay-out. The latter is extremely important if you are going to repeatedly use this book for field reference or even research after a field trip. This is how I expect you will use this book if you buy it: AFTER a field trip. Though smaller and lighter than Sibley it is still too large for most jacket or pants pockets and would only fit in a backpack or large belt pack. The Alsop book cover says it is a "an identification guide." It is not an appropriate replacement if you already haul Sibley into the field. It is also not a good replacement for the more commonly carried field guides listed above. Here's why:

1) The large illustrations are mostly photographic. Even some field marks that are called out and described are not clearly shown. Many of the small illustrations are less than a half-inch long, not very useful. 2) There are no group com-

parison pages: no side-by-side shorebirds, hawks in flight, fall warblers or gulls. Now that we have Sibley we know how instructive such comparison pages can be. 3) In "habitat" and "nest identification" categories the book uses a series of small, non-intuitive symbols. It reminds me of the frustration in trying to decipher the similar symbol system used in The Birders' Handbook by Paul Ehrlich et al. The symbols occupy enough space that clear text could have been used instead. 4) It gives equal treatment to the Little Ringed Plover and the Song Sparrow. Each bird in the book gets a page. Even our Island Scrub-Jay! Yet, the common Song Sparrow comes in a wide variety of subspecies across the western U.S. offering some potentially baffling identification problems. This book won't help with those. It WILL help you keep from confusing the Little Ringed from the Common Ringed and Semipalmated Plovers which are "similar birds." Whew! 5) Alaskan rarities are mixed in with the expected birds. Peterson and ABC both wisely gave these species their own section at the back. I put tabs on my Alsop guide to find key family sections. My "thrush" tab is on the bluebird page, four species into the book's thrush section. I chose to bypass such species as Red-flanked Bluetail and Stonechat. And I actually grew quite fond of the Stonechat during a recent trip to Spain where they flycatch along the fence lines.

This book does combine the elements of a field guide with more encyclopedic information found in publications like Kenn Kaufmann's *Lives of North American Birds* or the Audubon Society's *Master Guide*. These books cover the natural history

of species, not focusing on identification. This book attempts both. It points out key field marks well (aside from the illustration problems). Then it covers such topics as: habitat (with those silly symbols), nesting, feeding, range (maps on each species page), population and conservation status, song, migration, similar birds, nest identification, flight pattern and a size comparison between the bird and the book itself. Now that's a clever idea some graphic designer can brag about for decades. Perhaps the best unique feature: how does a species behave at a bird feeder? Great for the many backyard birders. No other inclusive guide does this as clearly in company with identification and other species data. However, there are already many books directed at common backyard species and feeders.

Also, I like the work Alsop did in some of these categories. Flight pattern can be a useful field mark and it is clearly illustrated for each species, such as the familiar sine curve of most woodpeckers. There is a brief text section on flight as well. No other guide has done this for every species. "Similar Birds" is a good idea, often well-done in this book. Only the Audubon Master Guide gives such info for every species. However, I did a double-take when I noticed Western Gull was "similar" to Heermann's Gull, but not vice versa. The author, Mr. Alsop, lives in Tennessee. One birder's similar can be another birder's obvious.

This book is carefully laid out, befitting its graphic-savvy publisher. It is in taxonomic order, something

*Continues on page 11*



The fall migration is in full swing, with numerous reports of vagrant wood warblers and six review species. The fallout appears to have been enhanced by the appearance of a strong weather front including a spectacular lightening display on Sept. 24 that may have caused migrating birds to pause in Northern California. Many birders, including this observer, were also thankful to be able to be outside and appreciating nature's gifts in the wake of the terrible events of Sept. 11.

### Albatross to Skimmers.

Sixteen Black-footed Albatross were identified on a SON PT Sept. 7 (DLSh), and 65 were seen on a Sept. 15 SON PT (DN). A Pink-footed Shearwater was at Patrick's Point, HUM, Aug. 31 (EE), one was off the Cliffhouse, SF, Sept. 8 (HC), some were seen on a Farallon Islands PT, SF, Sept. 9 (ME), the Sept. 7 SON PT had only one (DLSh), but the Sept. 15 SON PT really scored, counting 110 of that species (DN). One **Manx Shearwater** (*Puffinus puffinus*) was spotted among ~75–100,000 Sooty Shearwaters off Capitola Beach, SCZ, Sept. 24 (DSu). Good eyes, David! A White-faced Ibis, uncommon on the coast, was near Long Marine Lab, SCZ, Sept. 21 (JD, MS). Almaden Reservoir, SCL, continued to host a large Wood Duck contingent (32 birds) Aug. 31 (AV). There was a single report of a Eurasian Wigeon at Calero Reservoir, SCL, Sept. 22 (JM), and a female Hooded Merganser was seen in Los Gatos Creek Park, SCL, Sept. 17 (DG). A Broad-winged Hawk was at Soquel Demonstration SE, SCZ, Sept. 14 (DSu), and another flew near Hawk Hill, MRN, Sept. 23 (JMo, RFi), two immatures were at Muir Beach, MRN, Sept. 23 (Dave McKenzie), and a single Broad-wing was over the Fish Docks, PRNS, MRN, Sept. 25 (JR). Two Swainson's Hawks were reported

near the coast: one at Harkins Slough, MTY, Sept. 2 (RW), and the other over Redwood Shores Sewage Treatment Plant, SM, Sept. 8 (RSTh), while two Ferruginous Hawks with engaged Talons were spotted over Santa Cruz, SCZ, Sept. 25 (JeS).

An American Golden-Plover was seen at Moro Cojo Slough, MTY, Sept. 3 (RFo) and up to 3 of the species were at Manila, HUM, Sept. 23–24 (DFi, BM, SM). Single Pacific Golden-Plovers were at Moro Cojo Slough, MTY, Sept. 3 (RFo), Pescadero SB, SM, Sept. 1 (AE), Point Joe, MTY, Sept. 24 (RFo), Manila, HUM, Sept. 23 (DFi) and 4 others were in their usual location at Spaletta Plateau, PRNS, MRN, Sept. 2–8 (KG, KH). The **Common Greenshank** (*Tringa nebularia*) that came to the Mad River, McKinleyville, HUM, in late August stayed around until at least Sept. 15 (CO, KR, BCA, MOB), delighting many birders who traveled to this northern outpost to view what may be its first accepted record for the lower 48 states.

The sole report of a Solitary Sandpiper was from San Gregorio Creek, SM, Sept. 2 (RSTh), and a Whimbrel at Kelsey Creek, Clear Lake SP, LAK, Aug. 31 was a 3<sup>rd</sup> county record (DW). Five Semipalmated Sandpipers were found during the period: at Arcata, HUM, Aug. 31 (DFi), Abbott's Lagoon, PRNS, MRN, Sept. 2 (ME), Kelsey Creek outlet, Clear Lake SP, LAK, Sept. 7 (DS), Moss Landing, MTY, Sept. 9 (ST), and Harkin's Slough, MTY, Sept. 13 (RW). Pectoral Sandpipers were extremely abundant, with at least 130 found over ALA, HUM, LAK, MRN, MTY, SM, SCL, SCZ, and SON counties (one was a life bird for this observer). One of the 3 or more Pectoral Sandpipers at Kelsey Creek, Clear Lake SP early in September was a 1<sup>st</sup> county record (DW). A Sharp-tailed Sandpiper was at the Mad River, HUM, Sept. 4 (fide BCA), a second at Hunter's Lagoon,

MEN, Sept. 10 (DT), and a third at the Farallones, SF, ~Sept. 7 (PRBO). A Stilt Sandpiper continued at Alviso, SCL, through at least Sept. 18 (BR, FV, MOB), another was found at Doran County Park, SON, Sept. 15 (DS), and a third individual was seen at the Carmel R. mouth, MTY, Sept. 25 (BH, RFo). The Buff-breasted Sandpiper reported last month continued at Abbott's Lagoon, PRNS, MRN, through Sept. 5 (PW, KB, RS, MOB) and other single birds were found at 10 Mile Beach, MEN, Sept. 12 (MaM), Loleta, HUM, Sept. 5 (SM), Beatrice, HUM, Sept. 2 (SM), and at the Farallones, SF, ~Sept. 7 (PRBO). A Ruff remained at Alviso, SCL, through Sept. 17 (BR, FV, MM, MOB), and 8 others were identified in HUM, MRN, MTY, and SON counties.

Five South Polar Skuas showed up on the Sept. 7 SON PT (DLSh) and there were 3–5 of them on the Sept. 15 SON PT (DN). Unusual was a Parasitic Jaeger spotted flying toward Coyote Hills RP, ALA, Sept. 12 (RSTh). Even more notable was a Long-tailed Jaeger at Kelsey Creek outlet, Clear Lake, LAK, Sept. 7, for a 3<sup>rd</sup> county record (TE, DS), and another Long-tailed Jaeger was seen off Ocean Beach, SF, Sept. 11 (ME). Pelagic trips in SON county waters had good counts for that species: 112 on Sept. 7 (DLSh), 55 on Sept. 11 (DN), and 38 on Sept. 15 (DN). A Franklin's Gull was found on a Monterey Bay PT, MTY, Sept. 8 (ST) and a second individual was at PRNS, MRN, Sept. 18 (RS). A **2<sup>nd</sup> year Little Gull** (*Larus minimus*) was identified at State & Spreckles, Alviso, SCL, Sept. 17 (JL). This species is the world's smallest gull and is mainly a Eurasian breeder, with a few scattered sites in Eastern North America (Harrison, 1985). We hope records will be submitted to the CBRC for review. Unusual inland sightings of Sabine's Gulls were represented by single birds at the Lodi



# Wood Warbler Sightings

## Nashville Warbler

Sept. 12	Bethany Curve Parkway, SCZ	SG
Sept. 12	Soquel Creek, SCZ	DSu
Sept. 14	Soquel Demonstration SF, SCZ	DSu
Sept. 14-15	Pacifica, SM	JW, HC, MOB
Sept. 15	Mendoza Ranch, PRNS, MRN	GG
Sept. 15-21	Lighthouse, PRNS, MRN	FB, ME
Sept. 18	Nunes Ranch, PRNS, MRN	FB
Sept. 25	New Brighton SB, SCZ	RW
Sept. 25-24	Bodega, SON	DS, LC

## Virginia's Warbler

Sept. 11-15	Pacifica, SM	DSi, RSTh, MOB
Sept. 15	Big Sur R. mouth, MTY	JaS

## Lucy's Warbler

Sept. 16	Pescadero Marsh, SM	RSTh
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## Northern Parula

Sept. 4	Lake Merced, SF	DA
Sept. 7-19 (con't Aug. 27)	Pine Lake, SF	BE, JW
Sept. 8	San Gregorio Creek, SM	RSTh

## Magnolia Warbler

Sept. 14	Fitzgerald Marine Reserve, Moss Beach, SM	RSTh
Sept. 15-16	Antonelli Pond, SCZ	TN, RiC, DR, MOB
Sept. 15-16	Mission Trails Park, Carmel, MTY	RoF, DF
Sept. 15	Mendoza Ranch, PRNS, MRN	GG
Sept. 19	Presidio Hills Restoration Site, SF	JC
Sept. 20	San Gregorio Creek, SM	
Sept. 18-21 (1-2)	Lighthouse, PRNS, MRN	FB, JMo, RFi
Sept. 22-24	El Polin Spring, Presidio, SF	JC

## Cape May Warbler

Sept. 24	Mendoza Ranch, PRNS, MRN	JMo, RFi
Sept. 25	Sutro Heights Park, SF	HF,

## Black-throated Blue Warbler

Sept. 20-21	Nunes Ranch, PRNS, MRN	JMo, RFi, ME
Sept. 21-24	Hole-in-the-Head, SON	DS, LC

## Black-throated Green Warbler

Sept. 22	Pescadero Creek, SM	AW
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## Blackburnian Warbler

Sept. 8	Campbell Cove, SON	DN
Sept. 13	Outer PRNS, MRN	RS
Sept. 20	Mendoza Ranch, PRNS, MRN	JMo, RFi
Sept. 22	East Wash, SF	fide HC
Sept. 24	Fish Docks, PRNS, MRN	JMo, RFi
Sept. 23-24	Lake Merced, SF	HF, MU
Sept. 25	Sutro Heights Park, SF	HF, MU

## Prairie Warbler

Sept. 8-22	Merrie Way, SF	HF, RF, JW, MOB
Sept. 8	AMSP, MTY	CH
Sept. 10	East Wash, SF	ME
Sept. 12	Soquel Creek, SCZ	DSu.
Sept. 15 (3)	Outer PRNS, MRN	RS
Sept. 15-18	Nunes Ranch, PRNS, MRN	GG, FB
Sept. 21-24	Lighthouse, PRNS, MRN	ME, JMo, RFi
Sept. 24	Mendoza Ranch, PRNS, MRN	JMo, RFi
Sept. 25	Crespi Pond, Pacific Grove, MTY	DR

## Bay-breasted Warbler

Sept. 21	Stinson Beach, MRN	RS
Sept. 22-24	Near Olympic Golf Club, SF	JW, CL, ME, MOB
Sept. 24	L. Merced, SF	CL, JW
Sept. 24	Harding Park, SF	JW, ME, MOB

## Palm Warbler

Sept. 8-24	Merrie Way, SF	DA, GD, MOB
Sept. 16	Wright's Beach, Son	DS
Sept. 20-21	Lighthouse, PRNS, MRN	fide JMo, ME
Sept. 22	Olympic Golf Club, SF	fide HC
Sept. 24	Manila, HUM	DFi
Sept. 24	Harding Park, SF	RC, JW, ME, MOB
Sept. 24	L. Merced, SF	CL, JW
Sept. 25	Mendoza Ranch, PRNS, MRN	FB

## Black-and-White Warbler

Sept. 2	Half Moon Bay, SM	RSTh
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Sept. 4-7	Soquel Creek, SCZ	DSu
Sept. 14	Princeton, SM	RSTh
Sept. 14	Nunes Ranch, PRNS, MRN	JMo, RFi

## Prothonotary Warbler

Sept. 12-15	Antonelli Pond, SCZ	TE, TN, AS, MOB
Sept. 20	San Gregorio Creek, SM	RSTh

## Worm-eating Warbler

Sept. 21	Big Sur R. mouth, MTY	JaS, AK
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## Ovenbird

Sept. 13	Outer PRNS, MRN	RS
Sept. 17	Lincoln Park, SF	fide HC
Sept. 18-21	PRNS, MRN, Lighthouse	RS, RL

## Prothonotary Warbler

Sept. 12-15	Antonelli Pond, SCZ	TE, TN, AS, MOB
Sept. 20	San Gregorio Creek, SM	RSTh

## Northern Waterthrush

Aug. 30	Big Sur R. mouth, MTY	JaS
Sept. 1	Stevens Creek, SCL	NCRBA
Sept. 3	Carmel R. mouth, MTY	RoF, MPRBA
Sept. 7 & 25	Farallones, SF	PRBO
Sept. 9	Pajaro R., SCZ	DSu
Sept. 12	Rail Ponds, SON	DN, MP, DH
Sept. 12-14 (1-2)	Antonelli Pond, SCZ	TE, TN, SG,
Sept. 15	Outer PRNS, MRN	RS
Sept. 14	Middle Lake, GGP, SF	BF
Sept. 14-25	Stevens Creek, SCL	MR
Sept. 15	BSOL, MTY	JaS
Sept. 15-22 (1-2)	Carmel R. mouth, MTY	RoF, BH, MPRBA
Sept. 16	Garcia R., MRN	MaM
Sept. 22	Toddy's, PLA	JoS
Sept. 25	Bodega, SON	DS
<b>Connecticut Warbler</b>		
Sept. 22	PRNS Lighthouse	AE, MOB
Sept. 25	Farallones, SF	PRBO
<b>Canada Warbler</b>		
Aug. 31	Tilden Park, CC	NCRBA
Sept. 20	Pescadero Creek, SM	RSTh
Sept. 22	Nunes Ranch, PRNS, MRN	TK

## Observation...

Continued from page 9

sewage ponds, SJ, Sept. 2 (CL), one seen flying under the Bay Bridge, SF, Sept. 10 (MaR), and another at Stafford Lake, MRN, Sept. 20 (LS). The Sept. 7 SON PT recorded 1850 Sabine's Gulls in their normal habitat at sea (DLSh). Good news from the Alameda Point, ALA, Least Tern Colony was that although nesting attempts were 37 fewer than last year (275 this year), there were 350 fledglings, 150 more than in the previous year (MeE). The Black Skimmer Colony continues to grow at Charleston Slough, SCL, with up to 18 birds reported during the period (JM, BB, MD), while a single Black Skimmer was still on White Slough, Vallejo, SOL, Sept. 2 (CL)

## Doves to Vireos.

Russian Gulch SP, MEN, hosted a White-winged Dove Sept. 14 (DS). Three observations of Black-chinned Hummingbirds were reported: one near Natural Bridges, SCZ, Sept. 12 (TE), one at Campbell Cove, SON, Sept. 12, was a 4<sup>th</sup> county record (DN, MP, DH), and the latest was at PRNS, MRN, Sept. 21 (RS). Rare in the fall was a Calliope Hummingbird at Pacific Grove, MTY, Sept. 25 (DR). Three Black-backed Woodpeckers were spotted at Lassen Volcanic NP, LAS, Sept. 1-2 (RL). A Least Flycatcher was seen at Gonzales, MTY, Sept. 4 (KVV), another at Outer PRNS, MRN, Sept. 13 (RS), and a third at Half Moon Bay, SM, Sept. 18 (RSTh). Several interesting *Empids* were recorded during the period. A Hammond's Flycatcher was along Coyote Creek, SCL, Sept. 7 (TR, JCe), two were on the Outer PRNS, MRN, Sept. 13 (RS), and another was near Fitzgerald Marine Reserve, Moss Beach, SM (RSTh). Single Gray Flycatchers were at Antonelli Pond, SCZ, Sept. 12 (TE), on Outer PRNS, MRN, Sept. 13 (RS), and at Pine Lake, SF, Sept. 18 (DM). Four Dusky Flycatchers were seen: at Mt.

Davidson, SF, Sept. 6 (PS), at CCFS, SCL, Sept. 6 (BR, FV), at East Wash, SF, Sept. 15 (ASH, JC), and at Natural Bridges SP, SCZ, Sept. 17 (RW). San Francisco continued to host Tropical Kingbirds in their preferred locations at the Buffalo Paddock, GGP, Sept. 24 (CL) and at Land's End, Merrie Way, Sept. 25 (AC, JW), although these may not be the same individuals previously reported. Another Tropical Kingbird was found at Montera, SM, Sept. 23 (RSTh). There were 4 reports of Eastern Kingbirds: at AMSP, MTY, Sept. 2 (SRv, CH, RoF), at Soquel Demonstration SF, SCZ, Sept. 14 (DSu), at Gualala RP, SON, Sept. 17 (DS), and at Neary Lagoon, SCZ, Sept. 16 (RM). Last but not least in the flycatcher group was the Scissor-tailed Flycatcher first reported July 17 remaining at the Long Marine Lab, SCZ as of Sept. 20 (MOB).

Vireos were also big in the news, with 5 **Blue-headed Vireos** (*Vireo solitarius*) being found. The first was at Antonelli Pond, SCZ, Sept. 12 (TE), the next at Bodega Bay Hole-in-the-Head, SON, Sept. 14 (DS), another at Bayview Park, SF, Sept. 22 (ASH), and two reports dated Sept. 23 from both the Mendoza Ranch, PRNS, MRN (RS), and the Farallones, SF (PRBO). The Blue-headed Vireo, a recent split from the Solitary Vireo, is a bird of the Eastern US, with breeding grounds in the Northeast and in Canada. Philadelphia Vireos numbered 6, being reported from the Carmel R. mouth, MTY, Sept. 15-16 (BH), East Wash, Lincoln Park, SF, Sept. 18 (HC), at the Mendoza Ranch, PRNS, MRN, Sept. 22 (RS), at Merrie Way, SF, Sept. 23-24 (RF, MU, CL, MOB), at Rodeo Lagoon, MRN, Sept. 23 (JMo, RFi), and Hole-in-the-Head, Bodega, SON, Sept. 17-24 (DN, LC). Not to be slighted were 5 reports of Red-eyed Vireos, from East Wash, Lincoln Park, SF, Aug. 31 (BF, HC), the Carmel R. mouth, MTY, Sept. 15-22 (TA, BH), the Outer PRNS, MRN, Sept. 13 (RS), Stevens Creek, SCL, mid-Sept. (NCRBA), and San Gregorio Creek, SM, Sept. 16 (RSTh).

## Wood Warblers to Orioles.

Wood Warblers included two review species (See Chart). The **Worm-eating Warbler** (*Helminthia vermivorus*) breeds in the Southeastern US and is a rare fall transient with most records near the coast (Small, 1994). The **Connecticut Warbler** (*Oporornis agilis*) breeds mainly in central-south Canada, and is a very rare fall transient, with only 2-3 reports per year (Small, 1994). Too numerous to list individually were more than 20 each Tennessee Warblers (compared with 2 reports for a similar period in 2000), Chestnut-sided Warblers (compared with 11 last year), Blackpolls (about the same as last year), and American Redstarts (vs. 9 for 2000). Toward the end of the period, the warbler fallout became an avalanche, and apologies are made to any observers whose reports were not included! A Gray Catbird was found at the PRNS, MRN, Lighthouse trees Sept. 15 (GG). Unusual for the coast was a Phainopepla in Pacific Grove, MTY, Sept. 23 (RoF). A Green-tailed Towhee was an uncommon find for Mix Canyon Rd., SOL, Sept. 3 (RoM). The PRNS, MRN, Lighthouse hosted a Summer Tanager Sept. 17 (PA).

No fewer than 14 individual Clay-colored Sparrows were recorded during the period over LAK, MRN, SF, SCZ, and SON counties. A Brewer's Sparrow was at Lobos Creek, the Presidio, SF, Sept. 6 (JC), and another was seen at Kelsey Creek Outlet, Clear Lake SP, LAK, Sept. 7 (DW). A Black-throated Sparrow was reported in SM county Sept. 18 (RSTh). Two Lark Buntings were found, one at Road Forks Pool, PRNS, MRN, Sept. 1 (RS), and the other at Westport, MEN, Sept. 7 (DT). Only one White-throated Sparrow report was received, from Coyote Hills RP, ALA, Sept. 17 (VR). Rose-breasted Grosbeak sightings numbered 25, with 12(!) of them at the Farallones, SF ~Sept. 17 (PRBO), and the rest spread over ALA, MRN, MTY, SF, SCL, and SCZ counties. Three reports of single Blue Grosbeaks came from Moss Beach, SM, Sept. 3



(RSTh), Stevens Creek, SCL, Sept. 14-15 (BR, FV, MR, MOB), and Henry Cowell SP, SCZ, Sept. 17 (MG). Blue-colored vagrants were also represented by 4 single Indigo Buntings, at Mt. Davidson, SF, Sept. 11 (PS), at New Brighton SB, SCZ, Sept. 15 (DSu), at the Presidio, SF, Sept. 17-24 (IIC, DM, JC), and at PRNS, MRN, Sept. 18 (RS). A Dickcissel was at the Farallones Sept. 23 (PRBO). Single Bobolinks were found at Half Moon Bay, SM, Sept. 2 (RSTh), at Moss Landing, MTY, Sept. 9 (ST), at Bodega Bay, SON, Sept. 10-22 (DN, DS), at the Lighthouse Entry Rd., PRNS, MRN, Sept. 21 (ME), at Arcata, HUM, Sept. 23 (DF), and in SM county Sept. 23 (RSTh), plus two others at the Farallones, SF, ~Sept. 7 (PRBO). Two final bright spots were provided by Orchard Orioles, both seen on Sept. 23, at Moss Beach, SM (RSTh) and at the Farallones, SF (PRBO).

## Sightings...

*Continued from page 9*

**Abbreviations for Observers:** BCA, Brian C. Acord; TA, Tim Amaral; PA, Phil Anars; DA, David Armstrong; FB, Florence Bennett; BSOL, Big Sur Ornithology Lab; BB, Bill Bousman; KB, Ken Burton; RC, Roy Carlson; RiC, Rita Carratello; JC, Joanna Cezniak; LC, Les Chibana; JC, Josiah Clark; AC, Alfredo Contreras; IIC, Hugh Cotter; GD, Gary Deghi; MD, Matthew Dodder; JD, John Dunn; TE, Todd Easterla; ME, Mark Eaton; AE, Al Eisner; EE, Elias Elias; DFi, David Fix; RFi, Robbie Fischer; BF, Brian Fitch; Rfo, Rick Fournier; RoF, Rob Fowler; DG, Don Ganton; SG, Steve Gerow; MG, Michael Getty; GG, George Griffith; KG, Kevin Guse; KHi, Kevin Hints; BH, Bill Hill; DH, Dave Holmann; CH, Craig Hohenberger; ASH, Alan S. Hopkins; AK, Andrea Klausen; TK, Ted Koundakjian; RL, Rick Lebadour; JL, Jim Lomax; CL, Calvin Lou; MM, Mike Mammoser; MOB, Many Observers; JM, John Mariani; MaM, Matthew Mattiesen; SM, Sean McCallister; DMc, David McCormack; DMacK, David McKenzie; BM, Brian McIntosh; RM, Richard Merriss; MPRBA, Monterey Peninsula Rare Bird Alert; JMo, Joe Morlan; DM, Dan Murphy; RoM, Roger Muscat; DN, Dan Nelson; TN, Todd Newberry; NCRBA, Northern California Rare Bird Alert; CO, Chet Ogan; MP, Mike Parmeter; PRBO, Point Reyes Bird

Observatory; VR, Vijay Ramachandran; MaR, Mark Rauzon; BR, Bob Reiling; JR, Jean Richmond; DR, Don Roberson; MR, Mike Rogers; KR, Kerry Ross; SRv, Steve Rovell; TR, Tom Ryan; PS, Paul Saraceni; JaS, Jason Scott; JeS, Jeff Scott; MS, Michelle Scott; DS, Doug Shaw; DLSH, Debra Love Shearwater; RS, Rich Stallcup; JoS, John Sterling; LS, Lang Stevenson; AS, Andy Stone; DSu, David Suddjian; SI, Scott Terrell; RSTh, Ron S. Thorn; DI, Dorothy Tobkin; MU, Myra Ulvang; KVV, Kent Van Vuren; FV, Frank Vanslager; AV, Ann Verdi; AW, Adam Winer; PW, Pete White; JW, Jay Withgott; RW, Roger Wolfe; DW, Dave Woodward

**Abbreviations for Counties and Others:** ALA, Alameda; AMSP, Andrew Molera State Park; CC, Contra Costa; GGP, Golden Gate Park; HUM, Humboldt; LAK, Lake; LAS, Lassen; MOB, Many Observers; MRN, Marin; MEN, Mendocino; MTY, Monterey; MPRBA, Monterey Peninsula Rare Bird Alert; NCRBA, Northern California Rare Bird Alert; PT, Pelagic Trip; PRBO, Point Reyes Bird Observatory; PRNS, Point Reyes National Seashore; RP, Regional Park; SF, San Francisco; SM, San Mateo; SCL, Santa Clara; SCZ, Santa Cruz; SOL, Solano; SON, Sonoma; SB, State Beach; SP, State Park.

## News from Audubon Canyon Ranch

*—From Betsy Stafford*

For the flora and fauna of our three Preserves, October's a time to prepare for winter rains and cooler temperatures. Blue and Black Oaks at Bouverie Preserve are dropping their leaves, newts (Red-bellied, California, and Rough-Skinned) are ready to forsake estivation for a good wet stroll in a blustery rain, Sonoma and Townsend Chipmunks are stuffing their cheeks with seeds, fawns are losing their spotted coats, and the lessening daylight is sending migratory birds off on their never ending search for more abundant food.

For our dedicated volunteers, October brings a frenzy of workdays, classroom visits, trail hikes with over 2000 schoolchildren, planning sessions, fall shorebird censuses, and training sessions (Bouverie has just

started its bi-annual training class for 36 new docents.)

If you'd like to sign up for a Resource Management Day (10/29, 11/12) or a Guided Public Walk (10/13, 11/3, 12/1) at Bouverie, please call 707/938-4554.

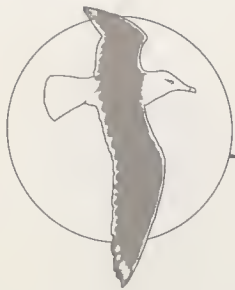
If you are an experienced shore-bird or waterbird observer and would like to help with a fall or winter census, please call our Cypress Grove Research Center at 415/665-8205. And if you'd like to learn more about the natural history of our Bolinas Lagoon Preserve and pass along your love of nature to others on weekends during our 2002 public season, please call 415/868-9244 now to join our merry band of Ranch Guides for a training class on Saturdays from February 2 through March 9.

## Book Reviews...

*Continued from page 7*

both Kenn Kaufman's and ABC's field guides chose to ignore. Wrongly, I would opine. Most birders now have the taxonomic habit. Why can't that be standard? Habitat groupings are often as artificial as taxonomy once you get beyond pelagic birds.

Summary: An interesting reference book, clearly laid out and easy to use. You probably won't take it out of your house or your car very often, but may still be worth the \$25 to you. A useful buy if you are a backyard birder with active feeders.



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